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The MANY SIDED MAN

EDWIN A. STRONG
The Character Builder

REPRINTED FROM THE
MICHIGAN TRADESMAN
OF FEBRUARY 4, 1904

Mrs. Frederick Stevens

22 '27 A

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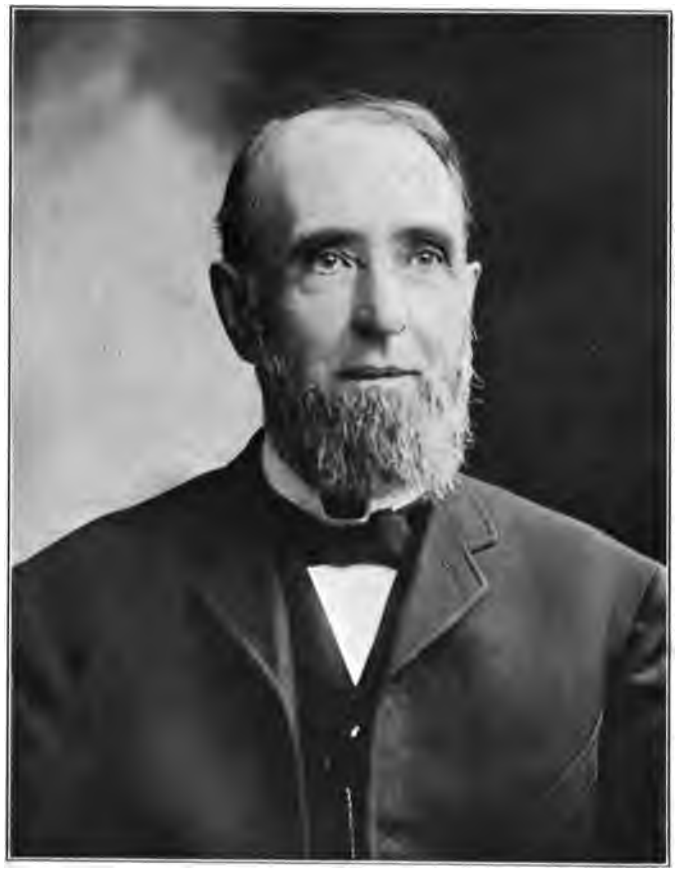

E. A. Strong.

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The Many Sided Man

Edwin A. Strong, the Character Builder

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Edwin A. Strong, the Character Builder

It is customary to save all the good things we know about a man until he is dead and then lavish them on his memory, smother his coffin with flowers and his grave with blossoms. The custom is a beautiful one and enjoys the distinction of having come down to us through the ages, but the Tradesman believes—and has always undertaken to act on such belief—that a little less eulogy at the funeral and a little more acknowledgment of the obligation due the individual this side of the grave are by no means out of place.

Especially is this true when applied to the life work of Edwin A. Strong, whose experience in the various channels in which he exerted himself during the twenty-five years he resided in this city is graphically described by eighteen contributors elsewhere in this week's issue.

What Mr. Strong's services were to this community others know in part; but only his associates in the schoolroom can understand the peculiar inspiration, the infectious and quickening enthusiasm, which he carries into his daily labor.

To work with him is of itself a liberal education. His praise is a sufficient guerdon; his own brilliant method at once the spur and the despair of others. As Emerson spoke of Carlyle's descending to the drudging details of his Life of Frederick from a superior height of cosmic knowledge, so Mr. Strong appears to apply himself to the questions of the hour, laden with the wisdom of the ages.

And to garnered knowledge and wide experience he adds a moral judgment which pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, so that to no man can better be applied the epitaph of Thirlwall: Cor sapiens et intelligens ad discernendum judicium.

To every one privileged to observe or to share his work as a teacher, his very personality is a thrilling summons. His inexhaustible fertility, his ever-renewed freshness, his indomitable spirit—falling to rise and baffled to fight better—these are among the qualities which perpetually astonish and delight those who are with him in daily association.

Mr. Strong has never talked cant. He gives simple expression in conversation, as well as in his lectures, to what he believes both practical and natural when perceived and understood. He has faith in the divine which is in every human heart, however obscured it may be by outward circumstances and environment. His judgment is not swayed by sentiment, but by the

conviction that humanity is in a process of evolution into higher conditions; and that every effort to bring a more complete realization of possibilities must bear fruit. He gives his life to this end, never losing faith under discouragement.

As the world counts, Mr. Strong's career has not been successful, because neither money nor fame has come to him in large measure, due solely to his own modesty in not only refusing to put himself forward, but in always keeping himself in the background. Many of his best friends insist that this is a serious defect in his character—that by so doing he has deprived the world of much to which it is entitled by constantly belittling his own efforts and decrying his own knowledge—but the Tradesman believes that this characteristic is the chiefest charm in the man; that it is in thorough keeping with his sensitive conscientiousness and methodical methods and rounds out his character into a harmonious combination.

Mr. Strong's sole ambition has been to help his associates and pupils over rough places into ways of pleasantness and peace. His work is character building, and the fruits for himself—a golden harvest—are manifest on every street of Grand Rapids, in every county in Michigan, in every state of the Union. No youth who ever comes under the spell of his influence can help being benefited, strengthened and encouraged. The bad is made good and the good is made better by an unseen force which neither teacher nor pupil is able to understand or define. Nor is this unseen influence confined to a single generation. It is noted in the children and grandchildren of those who imbibed wisdom at the feet of their instructor and it will continue to be a living force as long as time lasts. The man may die and his existence be forgotten by many, but the influence he exerted over the thousands of men and women with whom he came in contact will be perpetuated through generations yet to come.

Millionaires may bequeath us money in unstinted amount to erect hospitals, libraries, art galleries and museums, but Mr. Strong performed a greater service and left a more valuable legacy to this community than any other man who ever lived here, because he devoted his life to the building of men and women and the uplifting of character. For twenty-five years he stood before the people of this city and ministered to them both as teacher and citizen. His life was an open book that all might read, and his character shone forth like a beacon light to guide his fellows in the ways of honesty, duty, faithful service and righteousness.

The Many Sided Man

Loving Tributes to the Sterling Worth of Edwin A. Strong, the Veteran Educator.

The following letter from the editor of the Tradesman was recently sent to eighteen of the former associates of Prof. Edwin A. Strong, of Ypsilanti:

As a student under Mr. Strong I have always felt that his career in the Grand Rapids public schools and as a high minded and exemplary citizen was never given fitting recognition of a public character by the people of this city.

I have frequently discussed this subject with friends, including Hon. Charles W. Garfield, who suggests a symposium of opinions, showing Mr. Strong as the many sided man. In pursuance of this plan we have selected the following list of topics and assignments, and will ask you to kindly co-operate with us in this matter by preparing an article for the series, which we should like to publish in our issue of Feb. 10:

1. His boyhood and early manhood—A. J. Daniels.
2. Mr. Strong as an employe—J. H. McKee.
3. His relation to the early scientists of the city—Dr. Joel C. Parker.
4. His relation to the boys who founded the K. S. I.—Hon. Chas. W. Garfield.
5. His impress on the young men—Omer H. Simonds, Duluth, Minn.
6. The religious side of his life—Rev. A. R. Merriam, Hartford, Conn.
7. His love of the classics—Prof. Calvin Thomas, New York.
8. His ideas on charity—Miss Emma Field.
9. Mr. Strong as an architect—Chas. S. Hathaway.
10. His influence over his associates—Charles Chandler, Miss Annette C. Dickinson, Miss Ellen Dean.
11. His influence over his students—E. F. Sawyer, Cadillac; Mrs. Cornelia Hulst, Miss Helen Sauers, Gaius W. Perkins.
12. Mr. Strong as a public spirited man—Anton G. Hodenpyl, New York.
13. Mr. Strong as a companionable man—Ossian C. Simonds, Chicago.

The response was even more prompt and generous than was expected. Every one invited to contribute to the series insisted that it was a privilege to be given an opportunity to pay a word of tribute to one of the most lovable men living. The result is a very gratifying one to the Tradesman and must certainly be equally so to the many friends of Mr. Strong, whose career in this community from 1858 to 1885—a period of twenty-seven years—is fragrant with good deeds, high motives and unselfish devotion to duty. Gen-

erous as the contributors are to their subject, they have not painted the picture in too glaring colors, because no pen can do justice to the massive and solid integrity, the large, warm, generous heart and the brilliant and gifted mind which are distinguishing characteristics of the man. So long as life lasts and memory lingers all who have ever enjoyed the advantage of association or companionship with Mr. Strong will cherish the recollection of his lofty spirit and his winning manners—simple, sweet and genial.

Mr. Strong's Boyhood and Early Manhood.

I can not remember having seen Prof. E. A. Strong until about his fifteenth year, although our birth places were not more than a mile apart. We had attended different schools and at an early age circumstances had driven me several miles away from my first home. At about the age mentioned above we were working on adjoining farms and here began that acquaintance which has become more and more intimate with advancing years and which will continue while we live.

The four preceding years Mr. Strong spent in New England with a maiden aunt with whom he pursued the studies of philosophy and chemistry, of which he became so fond in after years. I have heard him say that although they constructed the apparatus they used, the results obtained were quite as satisfactory as any experiments he made in after years.

Mr. Strong was born in the township of Otisco, about eighteen miles south of Syracuse, on Jan. 3, 1834. I know but little of his parentage save that his mother was a sister of Samuel Pomeroy, who emigrated from New England at the time of the Kansas-Nebraska troubles and afterward became U. S. Senator from Kansas. The exact place of his birth was on a plateau, near the top of a high hill, from whose summit could be seen the townships of Tully, Cardeff, Pompey, Homer and others bearing classic names. The whole country round about is made up of hills, partially covered with forests, and in the valleys between lie nestled villages and lakes bearing similar names.

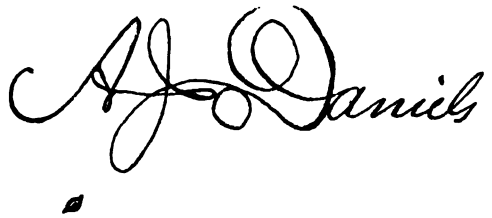
Only two miles away, in the next township and in plain view but far below, was another plateau, covered with great rocks of the famous Tully limestone, over which in after years we tramped together, stepping only on the rocks separated by narrow plats of grass.

Far off to the north and east could be seen Oneida Lake and nearer the reservation of the Onondaga tribe of Indians, through which we hauled to market the products of the farms, returning late at night with loads of merchandise from the merchants in the neighboring village.

I have never seen a more beautiful and picturesque region of country than this on which he could look by going a short distance from his father's farm. He has always enjoyed visiting the old homestead and looking down upon a panorama that was always before him when a boy and which, no doubt, had some influence in giving him a love for the natural sciences and ability to appreciate the beautiful in art or landscape wherever it came to his notice.

Later, when we were together in a preparatory school and college, I came to believe that his early studies and home surroundings had been the means of placing him far in advance of any of his classmates. One characteristic of his was to obtain by his own efforts that which others were usually willing to receive in the easiest possible manner. I think I can say that he never received any aid from anyone in the solution of any problem in mathematics and I have known him to get excused from a recitation when the instructor was to explain difficulties that other members were ready to abandon.

I will say no more as I value too highly his friendship.



Mr. Strong As An Employe.

Prof. Strong came to the Grand Rapids High School in the fall of 1858, upon the recommendation of Professor Danforth, and was either Principal of that department or Superintendent of Schools, with the exception of a portion of one school year, until June, 1885. He was, therefore, for more than twenty-six years an employe of the school boards of this city, first of Fractional District No. 1, as then known, and, after 1871, of the Board as now organized. He served as Principal of the High School from 1858 to the fall of 1865, when he took the superintendency, and served in that capacity until his resignation in January, 1871. The fall of the same year he was recalled and took the principalship of the High School, which he retained until the end of the school year, 1884-5. During the whole of this lengthy period of service Professor Strong's work was satisfactory to the school trustees; his relations with the teachers of the different departments most pleasant, his example beneficial, and his influence encouraging to their work; his character was a model to his pupils and a constant suggestion of nobility and purity to his associates. The school boards under which he served found him invariably the quiet, graceful gentleman of the truest and highest type. He was a thorough scholar, a really erudite man. I remember distinctly, on one occasion, a marked incident in evidence of this: Professor Strong was present at a gathering of the members of the School Board, the Central School teachers, and a few others, at the residence of John Ball, to meet a gentleman from Boston, a scientist of great learning and wide repute, whose name now escapes me. He and Professor Strong were introduced and entered into conversation. I sat by as an attentive listener. I noticed the modesty, almost timidity, with which Professor Strong began to converse. At first he was only the interestedly inquisitive learner at the feet of a master, a simple, earnest, questioning student. But soon his enthusiasm began to rise and a fund of information to flow from his lips on the special

subject of their conversation, which surprised me and evidently delighted our guest. He spoke of it to members of the Board at the close of the evening and said, "Your Mr. Strong is not only a delightful gentleman but a man of unusual acquirements. He modestly disclaimed any very thorough knowledge in the lines with which I am connected, but really I find him quite my equal in my own specialties. I congratulate you on having such a man on your school force here." Naturally such an encomium, from such a source, was a gratification to the Board which had employed him, and indicative of his value to the school interests of the city.

In his address at the opening of the school year, 1871-2, A. L. Chubb, President of the Board, said: "Realizing the importance of encouraging the study of the more advanced branches, such as are taught in our High School, the services of Professor E. A. Strong, late of the Oswego Normal and Training School, and formerly the much-esteemed Superintendent of Schools in Fractional Union School District No. 1, of this city, have been secured, in which we may consider ourselves exceedingly fortunate, as he brings to this work a mind of rare culture, richly stored with knowledge gained by a life of study and research. Under his charge, and with the co-operation he may rely upon from this Board, it is not too much to expect, that, with the school year this day begun, a new epoch in the history of our High School is also begun, to be characterized by greater efficiency, and it is hoped by a more liberal patronage."

In the President's report to the Board for the succeeding year occurs this paragraph: "If we would keep pace with other nations we must be vigilant in our efforts to extend and make as general as possible, not only a knowledge of the laws of nature, but we must also go farther and educate the rising generation in the application of science to the various industries of our country. * * * An important step in this direction has been taken by Professor Strong in the practical methods he has adopted with his classes in chemistry and physics."

In speaking of the courses of study for the High School, in his report for that same year, the Superintendent of city schools says: "All the courses of this school have been carefully re-written by Mr. Strong."

He was ever quick to note and remark upon any influence which tended to the advancement of educational interests, and bring it to the attention of the Board. His care and faithfulness in giving attention to the minutest suggestions of the Board are something also to be noticed. As an example of this, in one annual report the Board had incorporated a small list of books recommended for general reading to the pupils of the schools. In his report the next year Professor Strong takes pains to refer to the recommendation and specify in definite figures just how many pupils had followed the suggestion, and how many of the works each one had read.

Unwittingly chronicling the fulfillment of the hope expressed by the President of the Board regarding increase of attendance of the High School, when noting the appointment of Professor Strong to its principalship, the Superintendent in 1877 says in his report: "The rapid growth of the High School during the past few years is a most important fact in the history of the school for this period."

In the Superintendent's report for 1878-9 is embodied this from Professor Strong, as Principal of the High School: "The past year has been one of great prosperity for our High School. * * * Instead of repeating the usual statistical items, which can be gathered from the tables accompanying your report, I will say a few words concerning the purposes and methods of our school. It is our general aim to train our pupils for manhood and for citizenship—for citizenship, as this is the declared end for which public schools were by law established; and for manhood, as the prosperity of the State rests upon the self-activity, the vigorous independence, and the happiness of individual men and women. The State desires (by desires, I mean is organized and maintained in part to secure) the cultivation and normal development in men of such powers as are bestowed upon them by nature. It desires that they should be self supporting; that they should grow up in such a habit of fruitful work, in such moderation of desires, in such courage, and in such fertility of resource that they can surely hold their own in the struggle for existence. It desires that all citizens should be productive laborers; that they should not only learn not to hate work, but that they should learn how to render their labor effective, to produce real values, and to produce them in the best way. It desires that all citizens should be of sound mind and good judgment, competent to gather and weigh evidence on all questions of vital importance to themselves and the State. If the State is not concerned that every man should be educated, in the ordinary sense of the word, it is deeply concerned that every man should be intelligent, and capable of forming just opinions upon matters pertaining to the right conduct of life. These principles we strive to keep constantly in mind.

"More specifically, it is the aim of the teachers of the High School to cultivate a habit of work. The prompt and full performance of a daily task, repeated until it becomes a part of the life, steadying and controlling like a law of nature, we deem of the highest importance.

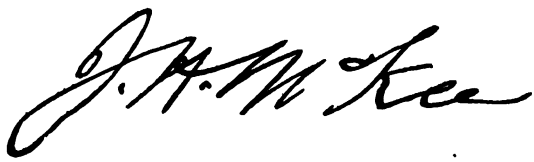
"We would cultivate a habit of accuracy; would teach that it is not sufficient to be 'about right,' to be 'near enough,' but that it is important to strive to be exactly right, or at least to know the amount of deviation from this standard. Some of our work which is often spoken of as needless and unpractical is instituted for this end. Let it be remembered that this quality does not come by the asking, but that it needs to be diligently cultivated, and also that when it is secured, it produces a superior quality of work, and thus adds to the wealth and power of the individual and the community.

"We would train our pupils to a habit of activity and energy, * * * to a superior method of work, in respect to the proper employment of time, in respect to the right use of material, objects of study, standards of authority, etc., and in respect to the best order and form for acquiring and stating truth. This constitutes a large part of the work of the school—work in which we do not think so much of the subject matter of geometry or botany, or natural philosophy, as we do of the formation of the scientific mind. It would seem more useful to know how to learn, how to compare, how to analyze, how to judge justly, how to take the right point of view,

how to investigate, than to know any number of separate results of such comparison, analysis or investigation. * * * Anyone who seriously strives to get the exact truth upon any subject will surely get a great deal besides—as a right method, industry, a love of truth, and much else. * * *

"We endeavor to secure a natural and free development of character. * * * As soon as a boy begins to work his tastes appear, he is stimulated by his successes, disciplined by pain and failure, finds what is useful to him, exercises himself in many methods for the acquisition and exhibition of truth, feels the restraint of care and authority and the stimulus of the life which is around him. Standards of truth and right are placed before him and urged upon his attention until he comes to measure himself truly by them. He soon begins to work more surely and more freely. He learns to trust his senses, to trust his intelligence and to trust and revere those standards of right conduct and action by which he is justified or condemned. Soon he himself and all that he produces come to have a fixed character (would that it were always as noble as it is natural and freely formed!) presenting some degree of unity and some promise of stability."

The comment of the Superintendent on this is: "How fully the purposes of the instruction as presented in the foregoing report are carried into effect, is too well known to require any explanation." And to this day it may be seen exemplified in the lives of honorable and successful citizens. None of Professor Strong's pupils who passed under his personal influence as a teacher and established their standard of civic morality and manhood from his example and teachings are implicated in the water scandal and defalcations which have made this city so sadly notorious. Of the value of this man as an employe of the Grand Rapids School Board there needs no greater evidence than this: the long list of worthy and valued citizens, men and women—valuable to the commonwealth—who have passed out from under his influence, having their stamp of mind and bent of thought influenced in a surprising measure by his precept and example. This city may well be proud and glad that a man of such qualifications, and a gentleman of such character, did, for such a period, live and labor so successfully within its limits.



His Relation To the Early Scientists of the City.

Professor E. A. Strong's influence upon early scientific thought of our city was of a very marked character. There were many lovers of science here, but scarcely one who could be classed as a "Scientist." I mean by this, one whose mind had been thoroughly grounded in the fundamental facts of modern scientific investigation; to those who were lovers of science,

and who in a desultory way were following some "specialty," he became at once an authority on not only their own specialty, but absolutely so on those subjects that they did not comprehend; not superficially, for it became apparent that whatever other qualifications he might possess, his mind was most essentially a scientific or analytical one. Everything was the subject of a mental analysis, and much of what was attributed to diffidence was really the results of that broad minded analysis which not only saw a subject from the common standpoint but looked on all sides of it and saw possibilities of error that made him chary of expressing an opinion that might after all be erroneous; but in the realm where he was the strongest—mathematics—there was no diffidence or hesitation. His expressed opinions were definite and clear. Aside from mathematics, his strongest hold was geology, and the one in which he took the most delight. He began at once to study our local geological conditions and we who were his contemporaries saw at once that he was the peer of us all. He was so well grounded in all that had been done that he was exempt from any unnecessary work and could go to the heart of a problem, when the rest of us could only guess; and so he took his place among us, very quietly, without any ostentation or assumption of superior knowledge, which we were always more than ready to justly claim for him.

In his public work in our schools his scientific methods soon made their way along those quiet, simple ways that were more effective from their very simplicity, and I sincerely believe that he made a more enduring mark upon the scientific trend of thought of our city than any other man who has ever lived among us. I remember very well that soon after coming here—I think the next year—there came that mental cataclysm that shook the whole civilized world, promulgated by Darwin and now designated as the "Development Theory." No one not in touch with that particular period can form any conception of the mental unrest and disturbance that prevailed; it seemed as though the whole moral, mental and physical world had been shaken to its foundations, and especially the religious world. Nearly every pulpit in the land thundered its anathemas against the new and soul-destroying doctrine; all of the scientific minds of the country, with the notable exception of Agassiz, accepted Darwin's conclusions with but few reservations. Mr. Strong held his consent in abeyance. It cut across so many old and supposedly solid theories that his analytical mind must needs sift all the pros and cons. I remember when Agassiz's creed against the theory was first published—the last article he ever wrote—I asked Mr. Strong "what he thought of it?" His answer was characteristic, "Whether Darwin is right or not, Agassiz is certainly wrong!"

I am never weary of giving my testimony to the mental and moral worth of one of the best men I ever knew, and I thank you, Mr. Editor, for the honor and privilege of testifying to the worth of such a beautiful life.

Joel H. Parker

His Relation to the Boys Who Founded the K. S. I.

During the year following the close of the Civil War, when Mr. E. A. Strong was at the head of the school system in our city, four boys who were in attendance at the High School, after consulting with Mr. Strong, met together in a chamber on Lyon street and organized what was known for some years as the Grand Rapids Scientific Club. These boys, under Mr. Strong's direction, and stirred by his enthusiasm, had made small collections in natural history and became so thoroughly interested in their work that it occurred to them an organization might be useful in many ways. Their names were George Wickwire Smith, Hertel S. Fitch, J. Frederick Baars, Jr., and the writer. Dr. C. B. Smith was our patron, Professor E. A. Strong was our chief counselor, and J. Morgan Smith was associate counselor. George Smith was the genius of this coterie of boys, and it was at his father's house that we gathered once in two weeks for our regular meetings, and it was in a chamber there that we brought together our collection. Every new specimen collected, whether it was geological, zoological or botanical, and every philosophical device which we made was reported to Professor Strong for his inspection, and particularly for his commendation, which was always freely given. We organized parties on Saturdays to scour the country about and make collections. These holidays were made doubly interesting when we could have Mr. Strong or J. Morgan Smith as our companion. It was on these excursions that we received from Mr. Strong the educational influence which went farther in the moulding of our minds and hearts than anything he gave us professionally in the schoolroom.

This club was a very close organization. We did not increase its membership rapidly, and no boy was considered for a moment who would not enter enthusiastically into the promotion of the objects of the association, and every boy admitted to membership had to pass favorably Mr. Strong's test. As I recall the names who became prominent in the organization, among them were Henry J. Carr, Lorenzo and Charles Winchester, Eugene F. Sawyer, Frank W. Ball, Theodore Wilson and William H. McKee. These boys strengthened the club by bringing to it the desire to make collections and special studies along the different divisions of natural history. Our museum became so large that it could not be accommodated in a chamber and we took it to a room which we rented on Monroe street. We made our own cases and paid the small expenses by dues, which we earned with our own hands. Gradually, because of the value of the collections, we awakened an interest in the members of the old Natural History Society, composed of such men as Dr. DeCamp, Dr. Holmes, Mr. A. O. Currier, Dr. J. C. Parker and Captain Coffinberry. Their organization during the days of the war had practically passed out of existence, so that there was nothing left of it except their collection, which was, for those days, quite a valuable one.

As the club grew stronger it became more ambitious. The boys desired a more satisfactory name and one that would comport with the larger work it had undertaken and which would give it rank with older associations in the country devoted to like interests. Mr. Strong suggested that we change the name to "Kent Institute," rather following the leadership of

the famous Essex Institute of Massachusetts. This was done and a new impetus was given with the name, and the society issued, in manuscript form, regular numbers of "proceedings." These were edited by our leader, George Wickwire Smith. In some numbers of these transactions will be found, if they are in existence, observations of real value in science and descriptions, particularly of insects, that never before had been described. It was to Prof. Strong, more than anyone else, that we were indebted for the words of commendation which gave us courage to go on with this work.

In 1867 the ambition of the crowd of boys then identified with the "Kent Institute" reached toward the ownership of the collection which had been gathered by the old Natural History Society, and they made overtures to the men who were left of that organization, and which had not held any formal meeting for years. In the meantime the Kent Institute had removed its collection and had its rooms in the old Lovett block. It was in these rooms that the most notable meeting in the history of the organization was convened. The members of the old Natural History Society then living in the city were invited to be present and every boy connected with the Kent Institute was present. This was the crucial event in the campaign, the purpose of which was to absorb the old Natural History Society. The boys had tackled each of the older men one by one and paved the way for what they hoped would be a successful issue. However, when the two elements came together it was found that some of the men connected with the older society felt that they were giving up a good deal in transferring their museum to the new organization, and at this meeting some very sharp words passed between the older and younger men. It looked for a time as if the combination would not be effected, but Mr. Strong, who was entirely in sympathy with both the older and the younger element, poured oil upon the troubled waters and compromises were effected, which resulted later in a new constitution and a modified name, and thereafter the organization was known as "The Kent Scientific Institute."

It is to Professor Strong, more than to any other one person, that this city is indebted for the development of an Institution in its midst which has been unique in its enterprise and of great value not only to the schools but to the entire city. Not one of the men who was connected with that early movement, the final outcome of which has been so satisfactory to our city, but will say to-day that the best result after all was accomplished through Mr. Strong's influence in moulding the character and purposes in life of the boys who composed the organization.

His Impress On the Young Men.

Owing to other engagements, which are a serious and persistent tax on my time, I feel myself unable to comply with your request, especially for publication on the 13th or 20th inst.

Professor Strong is a remarkable man and stands in my recollection pre-eminent over all other teachers with whom I ever came in contact. He possesses a logical mind and has the ability to explain and instruct so as to communicate the gist of the subject under consideration in a marvelous way. He has always been an educator, and by this I mean he has not only communicated information but he has developed the reasoning powers of his pupils. When you add to this his genial conduct and familiar companionship with the young, some judgment can be formed as to the wide extent of his influence. One feature of his relations to his pupils is that they continue to be his warm friends and admirers through life, wherever their lot may be cast.

I attended the Grand Rapids High School, where Professor Strong was the Principal, in 1860, and to-day no one could be more welcome at my home than he. We should come together on the same ground of good comradeship. Such a friendship as he stimulates is not dimmed by the lapse of time or by absence but rather strengthened. The breadth of his learning and his helpfulness endear him to us all and suggest aspirations to emulate his career. Some years ago I desired to examine the ultimate reason why the people, by general taxation, should support the public schools and how far that support should extend toward higher education and applied to him for information. He promptly gave me his own views and referred me to authorities where the matter had received mature attention, thus showing the same disposition to help as when in the performance of his duties as a teacher.

On the whole, I regard him as a model teacher and citizen whose influence for good in the world, and especially upon the young men who have been brought into relations with him, has been of unusual strength.

I regret that I can not do the subject justice.

O. W. Emmons

The Religious Side of His Life.

When one speaks of the religious side of some men's lives you find it easy to separate that feature from other aspects. It is seen as a distinct and professional thing in creed, doctrine or conversation. Such a man's piety is easily catalogued, and you can separate his religious orbit by church, prayer meeting and Sunday school. But there are other men whose religious life means all of the man, and all of the man at all times and in all places—an all-pervasive atmosphere which can not be exactly labeled in distinct religious terms of thought or experience or practice. This means a great deal more than the other sort, for it means both a conscious faith and an unconscious life which breathes the very spirit of Christ.

In speaking of Mr. Strong I can not separate his religious faith from all parts of the man we know and love. Every one is aware that his very presence is that of a devout and earnest Christian man; but it is felt more

in what he is than in what he says, and is seen more in the strength and poise of his everyday touch than in the Sunday dress. A certain reticence and reverence and modesty in Mr. Strong would be offended if I or any one else should speak now of things in the past or present which disclose a knowledge or present an analysis of a faith and experience which are his own, and with which a stranger intermeddleth not. Only let me say this: That in his most notable Christian grace, that of humility, and in the modest estimate of his own worth, so clearly seen by others, he little realizes what an inspiration he has been to many lives by his "beauty of holiness" and by the charm of his broad, tolerant and yet deep conviction of truth.

Mr. Strong always impresses me as one of the most scholarly men I ever knew, with a wealth of learning such as one seldom meets, who yet has kept such a beautiful grace of self-devotement and such a modesty of self-estimate that only a man can have who dwells in the secret place of the Most High. His life-specialty has kept him in the scientific realm of thought, but his Christian experience has balanced that specialty by the touch of an almost mystic apprehension of faith. His human sympathy and broad tolerance have kept pace with his intellectual grasp of realities. He sees truth through the eyes of the poet as well as through the glasses of the scholar. He is broad, and yet he has not forgotten, as some broad thinkers have, that there are the other spiritual dimensions of height and depth to compass. The religious life to him is a life of beauty, as well as the life of duty, and this it is which has made him so winsome in his influence over the more cultivated, while yet he has dignified and ennobled the most commonplace data of the school room or the church life. It is his balance of character and the all-round range of his loves and sympathies that everyone speaks of who knows this dear friend. I have seldom met a finer blend of the strong and the sweet graces of Christian character, and my memories of things he said in religious thought and of things he was in the Christian life make up together one of the choicest treasures I took away with me when I left the church and people of Grand Rapids.

His Love of the Classics.

I am very glad to contribute a modest note—and he would be the first to disapprove any other kind of note—to your contemplated symphony of praise in honor of my old friend, Edwin A. Strong, whom I liked the first time I met him, one day in September, 1874, and have liked ever since. The particular phase of his make-up which you ask me to consider—his love of the classics—is not without its difficulty; for he is a physicist and I am a Germanist, and at this date his love of the classics does not bulk so very large in the mental image of him that I carry about with me.

Still, my memory is clear that, some thirty years ago, I did teach Latin and Greek for three years in the Grand Rapids High School, of which he was then Principal, and that I always found him sympathetic and cordially helpful in his dealings with me as a subordinate and in his general attitude toward the studies which I represented. He believed in their value as heartily as I did and supported my efforts in every possible way.

I find, however, upon close inspection, that my tender feeling for Mr. Strong has very little to do with the views he may have had about Cicero and Virgil and the saving grace of the Latin grammar. It is much more personal, more human. I was young and green—not yet twenty—and it was of immense value to me that at the threshold of my professional life I had for my first chief a thoroughly good teacher, who was at the same time a tactful, cultivated, modest, broad minded gentleman.

Calvin Thomas

His Ideas on Charity.

I am greatly pleased to know that the thought that has always been in the minds of the many who have appreciated Professor Strong—that he has not been fitly recognized in this city—is about to find expression.

While Professor Strong was at the head of the High School he often accepted invitations on Saturdays and vacation times to speak at teachers' associations in the country.

While we do not recall a word he ever said on charity, yet when we think of this young slender professor taking a long ride in March over rough roads, we know he gave a real gift to the eager minds of these country teachers who looked to him as their ideal teacher and scholar. His influence over these outside groups can never be known. He always gave to them his best thoughts, and, in return, they thought of him as an "ideal knight who reverenced his conscience as his king." To some of these who listened to him then was given the happy privilege of being associated with him as a teacher when he was Superintendent of Schools. And he was always an inspiration, and in his quiet way was a real King Arthur to the "goodly company" who gathered at the "Table round" in the old Central schoolhouse.

Emma Fuller

Mr. Strong As an Architect.

In the days of '49 the people of Grand Rapids were more deeply interested in ways and means for getting to California than in the problems of light, heat and ventilation; more directly concerned in the essentials—bread and butter—than in the science of drainage. And so when they built the old Union-School-on-the-hill they put up four walls of stone dug from the bed

of our river, put a tin cover upon them, cut a lot of openings for doors and windows and, as the crowning glory of the box-like structure, surmounted it with a cupola.

So it happened, when Professor E. A. Strong began his duties in 1861, as Principal of the school, that the various shortcomings of the building and its accessories became at once a source of deep interest to the man. His artistic sense revelled in the glory of the site and his analytical habit quickly differentiated the beauties of both aspect and prospect. The great oaks in the boys' yard became his friends on sight, and the neglected little fenced-off front yard blossomed in honor of his coming.

He was Principal, Sanitary Engineer and Landscape Architect in one, and as such the narrow and rather steep stairways and hallways leading from floor to floor irritated, but did not disturb, his equilibrium; the great box stoves, perfect gormandizers in the way of fuel, the tiny panes in the small windows, the long reaches of stove pipe that stretched across the rooms, the ugly outbuildings and the dilapidated fences and walks all came under his eye and influence so that improvements so far as possible within the limits of the city's purse were prompt in following.

It is a good architect who can produce distinctly better conditions by using what he has immediately at hand and without waiting for greater means, and it was by such an achievement that Professor Strong won the esteem and confidence of every pupil in the school. There was a more even and reliable distribution of heat in the large assembly rooms; when ventilation was needed pupils pulled down this window or that one intelligently and systematic attention was developed in the manipulation of the window shades so that the supply of light was strong and abundant without being garishly obtrusive or weak and insufficient at times.

And all this was accomplished without the turning of a spadeful of earth, without tearing up a single floor board, without the stroke of a hammer, because Mr. Strong understood his building as it was, because he convinced his associate teachers as to his thorough knowledge of the necessities and the resources available and because, by virtue of his moral and mental values he commanded and received the absolute confidence and co-operation of both teachers and pupils. The fences and walks were repaired and their neatness was considered and guarded by the boys and girls, because Professor Strong had impressed them that it was the thing to do; the old oaks in the yard were more reverently treated because Professor Strong had given sufficient reasons for the bestowal of such respect, while the younger trees—the timid successors of scores of tender maples and elms and oaks that had been regularly pulled and hauled and twisted out of shape by thoughtless boys and girls—began to understand that they were entitled to an honored place in the school's curriculum and so took courage and thrived mightily. And all because Mr. Strong had succeeded in showing that the one thing worse than cruelty to animals was cruelty to vegetation.

Meanwhile Professor Strong, taking the dimensions of the school yard and its location and character into confidence with its purpose, began studying for a new building. The question of a fixed water supply throughout the

structure, the probable supply of heat required, the matter of lighting, naturally and artificially, the drainage question and, above all, the ventilation of the building were thoroughly studied. Then came sketch after sketch of ground plans, second, third and fourth story plans, front elevations, side elevations and so on until at last he knew accurately the size and character of the building demanded by the needs of the city's educational interests and he knew, approximately, what should be the cost of the structure desired.

Not that Professor Strong was so much inflated by his knowledge of things and his appreciation of conditions and possibilities that he was an architectural bigot. At no time did he study or plan or suggest or oppose, expecting that the prospective new school building would be constructed from working plans of his designing. He believed in intrusting such a work to the trained professional architect and builder. Just the same, the fact remains that in the Central High School building as it was afterward completed there is, perhaps, as much of Professor E. A. Strong's study and judgment as was contributed by any other one man.

Incidentally and perhaps as a sort of recreation, Professor Strong planned and built a home for himself. He found a desirable lot (No. 77) on the north side of State street, between Lafayette and Prospect streets. It was (in those days) on the very edge of the city, with meadows, gardens and cornfields in plain view to the east and south. Shade trees and wild flowers were common in the vicinity and these things, with the bucolic presence of wandering cows, had their influence. The house still stands, a modest frame structure with the convex curve of roof, the eaves broadly overhanging, the sides relieved by beaded battens and great scrolled brackets that distinguish the Swiss chalet order of construction. It was built as a home, with plenty of light and ample yard room about it. It was different from anything in the line of dwelling houses possessed by Grand Rapids and it came to be known among the old timers of forty years ago as "Professor Strong's hobby house."

That it still stands in good condition, that it does not seem out of place in the present thickly built up section of the city, that it preserves a pleasing individuality among its dozens of elaborately large and expensive neighbors and that it is known and affectionately recognized by the old timers of to-day as "Professor Strong's little old home" prove conclusively that had that gentleman devoted himself to architecture he would have scored a veritable triumph; that, deciding to devote himself to the teaching profession, he utilized his temperamental values successfully by calling into play his natural knowledge and appreciation of the beautiful.

His Influence Over His Associates.

I am asked to contribute to the Tradesman some thoughts on the influence which Professor E. A. Strong had over his associates.

It was my pleasure to be associated with the venerated instructor for eleven years, with but a short interval, while he was a Professor in the school at Oswego, New York. I came here into the family of public school teachers in 1866, and was Principal of what came to be known as "the Central Grammar School" during the whole of the time I was a teacher—at least half of that time under his superintendency. My remembrance of his quiet, calm methods of suggestion to the young and inexperienced teachers when some serious problems of school government arose is, at this far distant day, exceedingly vivid. His advice to such was given in so modest a way that the feelings of the one in trouble were never injured; but rather the consciousness of the desire on the part of his or her superior to aid in obtaining a personal solution of the problem was planted in the mind of the teacher. This above all other things remains with me at the present time in my remembrance of Professor Strong. His smiling countenance as he came into one's school room was always a welcome event and the words of encouragement, where he saw them needed, or of advice or direction where he saw such to be needed, were always given with the greatest care not to startle or shock the teacher in the presence of his or her school. They were given in such a pleasant way that encouragement in the hard and weary task of teaching and government was always the result of his official visits.

Then again his sympathy in the trials which constantly attend the profession in every grade of work was so frequently given. His whole life here as Superintendent and teacher was filled with this spirit of the "Good Samaritan." This predominant trait in Professor Strong's character still clings to my memory now after twenty-seven years have passed since my teaching days.

Then, too, through the choice of the citizens of Grand Rapids, having for four years been a member of the Board of Education from 1880, I often came in contact with him, and together with other members of the Board we often were guided in our efforts for the advancement of the schools under his charge by his wise and modest counsels.

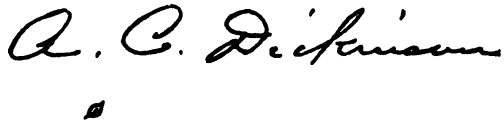
His influence upon the educational interests of this city will long be felt and the benefit of his wise counsels will long be discovered in the schools of this State.

It would be far easier for me to write from the standpoint of a pupil, for it was my high privilege to spend nearly four years under Professor Strong's instruction as a member of the first class graduated from our High School.

Called soon after to the position of teacher under his superintendence, I naturally retained all my early feeling of reverence, admiration and loyal

affection, and recall even yet with gratitude his ready sympathy and patient helpfulness.

The following characteristics, intimately affecting his associates, stand out most distinctly in memory after the lapse of years—a genial, kindly manner; the ability to criticise wisely, to suggest tactfully, to praise heartily; an ardent striving after a higher standard of professional attainment that was contagious, and, above all, the constant manifestation of a life moulded on the purest ideals, rarely illustrating the modesty of real scholarship and the supreme worth of genuine Christian character.



I am invited to write a word regarding the influence exercised over his fellow-teachers by Mr. Strong—my Principal in the Grand Rapids High School from New Years, 1878, until he left the city. I accept the invitation gladly. May I never be asked to remain silent when talk of this sort is going around! I only wish that I could condense into one short and perfect article all that I have ever said and thought upon that one theme—Mr. Strong's influence upon his fellow-teachers; but I shall not give even any general statement regarding the many ways in which contact with his character was a life-giving element in the school. There will surely be somebody to mention his courtesy of manner, his appreciation of effort, his high ideals placed before us as if we ourselves were inspired by them—these qualities will doubtless receive such mention as they deserve.

There are almost as many keys to any broad personality as there are people with whom it comes into personal relations, and I do not dream that the special characteristic which seems to me to be the mainspring of his attitude toward his teachers, toward all human beings in fact, is one which will be so important to other friends who perhaps called it forth less, but they will at least recognize it.

Mr. Strong always conceives of human character as a developing and mouldable thing; never from birth to death as a rigid and permanent one. It is the theory of evolution gloriously applied in psychology, or the doctrine of saving grace drawn down to help in the service of common life. In Mr. Strong's case I am confident that its origin was both in science and religion. And is it not essentially the note of the great teacher? On what other basis should there, indeed, be any teaching whatever? I suppose that so far as children are concerned all recognize it as the indispensable foundation on which to educate, but most of us act as if there came an age to human life—at twenty-five, or thirty or forty, somewhere—a point at which we change no more, unless possibly for the worse. Childhood and maturity, we say, are wax to receive and marble to retain impressions; but Mr. Strong had a different view of the matter and the whole world, his fellow-citizens, gray-headed though they might be, his pupils, however dull, got the benefit of his hopefulness. He never despaired of any one. How often such words as these were on his lips: "The boy has really learned some-

thing. He is a better fellow than when he came here." (And he mostly was, too!) Of some dubious mortal under unfavorable discussion his share of the conversation would often be, "Well, one must say this for him," and then a word of commendation, or at the worst an apology.

But teachers—they had and have need of the same toleration and pointing to a better way. If I only had words to show how useful he was to us in the old eighties. No least evidence of common sense, no little dwindling sprout of well doing ever died under his kindly fostering. Did we blunder regularly in some direction, we first heard of it when the head of the school had a chance to say that we were improving in that special quality. I well remember being told that my work was gaining in solidity and exactness—mercy knows there was room for it—and the consequent necessity I felt under to live up to the commendation. Not until years after did I appreciate the tact which saved my self-respect and presented me with an ideal at the same time.

Perhaps this ungrudging encouragement may seem a slight matter to those who have never needed it. But my opinion is that most of us are the better for all the praise we can honestly get. I know of three High School teachers who came here to teach because Mr. Strong would be their Principal. They had learned the value of his unfailing appreciation.

One other little habit I must mention if only because it seems to me worthy of imitation in any calling. I wonder whether it was reasoned out or was an unconscious touch of kindliness. Every teacher knows that there are days when the whole school machine goes at unusual pressure—examination days or days when some public program is to be given, at any rate, trying, tiresome, nervous hours. Well, at such times Mr. Strong was wont to drop into the recitation room almost idly, and with the most detached air in the world begin talking about something, anything provided only that it was sufficiently remote in space or time or subject from the prevailing excitement. What he had to say was always new, always interesting and opened so wide a door upon the world's affairs that pretty soon the examination or other crisis ceased to be paramount in one's mind and settled back into its proper proportions.

The mention of this trait gives me occasion to quote a phrase it always seemed to me might have been made with Mr. Strong in mind: He sees life justly and he sees it whole.

The Influence of Professor Strong Over His Students.

I ought to be fairly well qualified to speak of the influence Professor Strong exercised over the students who came under his charge, because I can truthfully give evidence to what that influence was in my case, inasmuch as I do not recollect of having ever met him since the day he handed me and

my associates our parchments—and they were parchments, too—that memorable June day in 1868 in old Luce's Hall on Monroe street.

Therefore, whatever influence Professor Strong may have had upon my life, it is certain that it came to me as a student, and not as an adult years afterwards, when, by changed conditions and altered relations, I might have read into student days something which in reality belonged to a different sphere.

Much as I have often regretted the fact that circumstances seemed to conspire to prevent our meeting, I can now see one ray penetrating what I had heretofore thought to be a dark spot in my life, for I am thereby able to be sure that what impressions remain are those made during my student days and not conclusions derived from subsequent contact.

While these conditions have their advantage, still they possess some disadvantage as well.

I was then but a lad, fresh from the country, with few acquaintances in the beginning and never "in the swim," so to speak. Therefore, what I have to say must necessarily be almost wholly in connection with myself, and should the personal pronoun be too prominent or this article seem to be too much a record of my own self, I have only to plead these facts in extenuation of the same.

There has been an abiding conviction with me through all these years that Professor Strong was par excellence a teacher; that he contrived to impress his personality upon those who came within the sphere of his influence in such a way that the result of the contact was, in a manner, to mark the whole after life, so that it might, though dimly, and at times imperfectly, still none the less surely never be exactly what it would have been had this mellowing and moulding influence never occurred.

The impression which I then received of Professor Strong was that he was a man of profoundly religious convictions, yet at that early age, in the very beginning of the new alignment between science and religion, now so common that we take it as a matter of course, he plainly saw that the narrow ecclesiastic could be better met by the scientific spirit than by the old methods we now term traditionalism. I well remember the tempest in a teapot raised by some of the good church people of Grand Rapids when Professor Strong explained to his astronomy class La Pace Nebula Hypothesis, then comparatively new to the scientist and absolutely unknown to the common working world. It was gravely whispered by some of these same good people that one who could so calmly impart to his students the information that, even by a Frenchman, the truth of the first chapter of Genesis was questioned and that the Bible contained aught but exact history was not fit to be in charge of the public schools of a growing city.

I have no way of knowing whether the incident annoyed Professor Strong or not, but of one thing I am certain—he gave no sign to us if it touched him at all. I am sure we felt kindlier toward him and admired him more because of it. We felt sure thereafter that truth to him counted for more than applause. This is one of the impressions we could not have gained had he been fearful of his critics.

I do not know why, but there has never been a time in all these years

when I could not recall, without hesitation, the exact manner of the man as he came into his class room in the old stone High School building. With what ease he took up the subject and with what consummate skill he handled it. To us his knowledge and information seemed unlimited, matched only by his kindness of heart and the readiness with which he always imparted as much as possible of this knowledge to us.

I well remember how he computed, before this same astronomy class, the time to expect a certain eclipse which was about to take place, calling our attention to the fact that he retained but two decimal places in his calculation, when not less than ten or a dozen must be used if accuracy was to be expected. Our marvel was great that even thus, and without ever once reviewing his work, he came within two hours of the exact time. I know absolutely nothing of the process by which he reached the result, and I care less, but were I an artist, I could draw a picture as true to life as a photograph of his appearance as he stood at the blackboard in the old north recitation room, as, with beaming face and brilliant eyes, he explained to us each step in the process before he wiped it off the board to give place to its successor.

These things which I have mentioned were not necessary to a certain way of teaching astronomy, but he threw them in as part of himself, and thus "I have not forgot the singer, though I have forgot the song."

I did not see as much of Professor Strong as I did of a good many other teachers of mine, but my mind more easily, to-day, recalls his form and manner, his look and gesture, than it does those of any other one, either in the High School or University, with the possible exception of two or three.

It is for these reasons that I am sure that those who had the privilege of knowing him much more intimately than I, and who were happy in being able to cultivate that acquaintance in after life, must have derived from him such a wealth of strength, not to mention beauty of character, that I look forward with eager expectation to the forthcoming symposium of his life and labors, and wish, here and now, to publicly thank Mr. Stowe for giving to all of us this opportunity to perform a simple labor of love.

E. H. Sawyer

Was the glory of those days that we spent in the High School during Mr. Strong's administration merely the reflected roselight of the dawn of our own youth? Were we only as fortunate as other illusioned young people in other high schools, or were we really particularly happy and had we some sense of it at the time, confirmed by later judgment? It is my conviction that we were blessed beyond our peers, and it is a pleasure to see now in retrospect the reasons which we were hardly aware of then.

In the first place, by the time that I came to know the High School it had an atmosphere which had been created by Mr. Strong and the little

group of kindred spirits selected by him and his almost brother, Mr. Daniels, then Superintendent of Schools. Such evident friendliness as that between Mr. Strong and Mr. Daniels, and between Mr. Strong and Miss Clark, was an effective daily lesson in the goodness of good will and perfect courtesy for every-day use, and I have no doubt that the serenity and good will in the school at large were partly a reflex of those beautiful relations. The spirit of appreciation and good will did not stop with the three, but was characteristic of the whole group of teachers, and the cordial fellowship among them gave us in the school the impression that scholarship and authority are not inconsistent with human sympathies and that the best is not learning but character. So Mr. Strong and his associate teachers, because their relations were not the business relations which can be adequately paid by public money, taught us by their conduct a truer wisdom than they taught in fulfillment of their contract.

In the school room Mr. Strong, while he seemed shy, had great natural dignity, but at the same time he was entirely free from the forbidding dignity that often keeps pupils from acquitting themselves with credit in a teacher's presence. His manner was cordial and he was easy of approach, but no one ever became really familiar with him, and it is inconceivable that anyone should have gone beyond that line where familiarity is a fault.

He was deliberate in reaching a decision and firm in abiding by it. During the four years that I was in his room I never heard a murmur that his judgment was partial or unjust, and on the one occasion when there was an argument against a decision of his, his modified decision was considered right. I never heard of anyone's wilfully disobeying him, and, as I remember it, rebellious pupils from other teachers' classes became tractable enough when they "stated the case" to him. It must have been a very trying ordeal to face his kindly and serious gaze knowing that he would not approve a thing done. There was a resonant undertone in his voice that makes me think he would have been terrible in indignation; the more so because of his complete self-control. He became a master of discipline, for he was so just and so reasonable, as well as so kindly, that his school saw things as he saw them and wished to do things as he wished them done. His management of his pupils reminds me of the way Mother Carey, in Charles Kingsley's story, made the myriads of creatures that live in the depths of the sea. She did not trouble to make them—anybody can make things if he will take time and trouble enough—she just made them make themselves.

Mr. Strong was full of interest in his work and, while his teaching was methodical and thorough, he succeeded in making us see the beauty of the thing he taught—there was something to touch the heart in the Doric simplicity of geometrical figures, as he showed us, and something akin to the Romantic in the prospect of parallel lines meeting in infinite space. In his teaching of his subject one felt his respect for his calling and for the individuality of those with whom he came into contact. In his respect for personality he was not in any narrow and commonplace sense personal, however, and by his very aloofness from the commonplace personal and by his habitually intellectual life he made us revalue the things of the world and the flesh, on the one hand, and the mind and the spirit on the other. He was distinctly moral in his teaching, and our reverence for him was partly be-

cause he dwelt apart from the ordinary business interests of life and did not even, as we understood, work for what would be regarded in his profession as a promotion. In the routine of his daily life, when he laid humble duties upon himself, we saw the purity and the nobility of his ideals, and, if we could have expressed ourselves, it would have been in something like Wordsworth's tribute to Milton, "His soul was like a star, and dwelt apart."

Mr. Strong was a practical teacher—so practical that he laid deep foundations here which have served for a growing High School. The fact that the attendance at our High School is proportionally larger than that in other cities, as I am told it is, is probably due to the unusual respect for education which became a part of the spirit of the city during the early days of its history, when the parents of the present generation were in his school. Such an influence is very persistent and extends still farther from the nucleus as times goes on, and we may congratulate ourselves that his spirit is wrought into the very nature of our city, and will be here in the future as it is in the individual lives of us who had the good fortune to sit daily in his presence.

Cornelia Stebbins Hulst

Mr. Strong—the mere mention of the name brings to mind the most pleasant of memories.

A teacher so modest, unassuming, unpretentious in manner, with superior, I might say almost faultless judgment, must have left his impress upon all the pupils fortunate enough to have had him for an instructor.

I think we all realized the unbounded knowledge which he possessed, for, whenever we went to him for information upon any particular subject, he would always say, "Really, I know very little about this subject, but I think you will find something about it in such or such books." Then generally followed a summing up of the article referred to and a request that we read it for ourselves for fear of an omission of some of the best points.

Years after I realized what that meant to us all—just his modest way of directing our reading—interesting and explaining to us first, that we might the more understandingly read later.

In cases of discipline—and there were many even in the High School—we always felt that anything that had been settled by Mr. Strong was justly settled, for he was never too busy to hear both sides, giving each the right to justify itself, if possible, and, after that, summing up and settling matters in such a manner that neither had cause to murmur.

He was always a respecter of others' rights and it was taught us in such a plain, simple way that all felt the force of the argument.

These are some of the things he taught us: Do right, because it is right, not for what others may think of you but for what you will think of yourself; a true gentleman is always a gentleman, no matter where you find him nor by what conditions he is surrounded; rules made at home or in school should be respected and obeyed—these are the first steps towards good citizenship.

Often while standing with our little ones in the morning as they sing—sometimes a patriotic song, sometimes a hymn, always the Doxology—I think of our mornings spent at the old High School, and then I fancy I can hear Mr. Strong's voice as he read alternately with the school from the Bible. After the reading followed a short prayer, earnest and effective, in which he asked that clearness of mind be given us, so that we might comprehend the lessons of the day and have strength to resist temptations that should present themselves.

Sometimes after this came a little talk of perhaps five minutes on loyalty, obedience, true politeness, or whatever was most needed at that time. Every morning saw us started out aright, with what good there was in us in the ascendency, and, with so many good seeds dropped into our hearts daily by a faithful and loving teacher, I never felt that we could wander away beyond recall.

A great teacher gives to his pupils the knowledge of right and wrong and then inspires them to choose the right. Such a teacher was Professor Strong.

Helen S. Sawers

It affords me much pleasure to pay a slight tribute to the work of Mr. Strong in our schools. I have always believed, and so expressed to others, that Mr. Strong's beautiful character had a lasting, a lifelong influence over his pupils; that in the moulding of character his influence was all for the good, and so strong that I feel that no one person in our city ever made a greater impress upon the minds and characters and morals of the city than he. If this influence was as strongly felt by others as myself—and I never heard an expression to the contrary—then, indeed, it is unmeasurable and of incalculable benefit to the citizenship of Grand Rapids.

I can recall many of the finest traits of character that have ever been a standard for emulation. Such were the impressions of my school life. In later years, in connection with the work of the Board of Education, I had opportunity for confirming my opinion of the high ideals of character, the modest bearing, the consideration for all by the one who governed only by kindness and the high respect won from all his pupils.

James W Perkins

Mr. Strong As a Public Spirited Man.

If I may be allowed to diverge somewhat from the text you have set for me, it will give me the greatest possible pleasure to send you a few lines expressive of my affection and esteem for Mr. Strong, the memory of whose gentleness and modesty and very lovable character and of whose ability as an instructor and Superintendent is the pleasantest and most satisfactory recollection of the old school days in Grand Rapids.

Mr. Strong's whole career has been in semi-public life, and his public spirit has been shown, so far as it has been possible to be shown in the life of a student and an instructor, in an effort to build up and improve the methods of instruction. But his influence has been felt far more through the impress of his character on individuals than through any public act—and character is by far the strongest point in his make-up, stronger even than his ability as a student or instructor. He certainly has a wonderfully well-equipped mind, great powers of concentration, splendid ability in imparting knowledge; but his greatest influence over the lives of others has been, unconsciously to himself, through the reflection of his pure, lovable character, his high mindedness, his gentleness and his modesty.

His whole life has been spent in the accumulation of useful knowledge and in imparting that knowledge to others, always giving out his information with great modesty; in fact, almost with an apology, as though fearing others might feel he assumed to be wiser than they. Many of his High School graduates will recall his evening lectures on astronomy, a subject with which he was very familiar, and they will also recall the delightfully modest, unassuming way in which he described the Heavens and how, forgetting himself in his interest in the subject, he would take his audience about the whole firmament, winding in and out among the planets and circling around their orbits, describing all in a most fascinating, familiar and conversational way—for all the world as though he were strolling through the woods with a party of children and explaining to them the trees and flowers along the path. In his lectures on Europe he described in detail the architecture of cathedrals and public buildings, the beauty of this painting or that piece of statuary. He would mention by name the streets and cross streets along which he was taking his audience, and all in his modest, almost apologetic manner; yet at that time he had never been in Europe and had no more personal knowledge of the sights described so minutely than he had of the canals in Mars. This ability to so strongly master a subject illustrates one of his strongest points as a student—concentration.

With all due deference to the very many able and high minded instructors who have taught the young idea in the Grand Rapids schools, none has ever approached Mr. Strong as a whole; nor will any other in the future quite equal him in every way. Some may be even superior to him in one characteristic and some in another, but it will be most difficult to combine in any other one man such ability for the accumulation of knowledge, such tact and ease and interest in imparting it to others, such high ideas of duty, such a sterling, fine, loving and lovable character, such comprehensive broad mindedness, such interest in others, such gentleness and consideration,

such ability for leaving the impress of his character on those with whom he comes in contact as to make it practically ineffaceable.

In short, Mr. Strong was, and is, the highest type of a man, and association with him can not but tend to uplift and broaden. Bless his heart, he doesn't realize all this; but, if that were possible, he would comprehend that all over the world are scattered those whom he has known in the long ago, but may not have seen for years and may never see again, yet whose thoughts turn to him with feelings of greatest esteem and who regard him as a type of the high minded, pure minded, able and useful citizen. And, when the time comes for him to leave this world, as it must come to all, he can rightfully feel, as he looks back over his career, that the world is better for the life he has led in it.

Amos G. Hodgkins

Mr. Strong As a Companionable Man.

I have been asked to write something about Professor Strong from the social side, but hesitated about doing so, fearing that I might in some way give offense to a friend who is very modest and unassuming. I called on him at Ypsilanti a few months ago, and was so interested in what he had to say that I missed the car I should have taken. Professor Strong at once said that it was all his fault and seemed quite wrought up about the matter. This was characteristic of him. He is always willing to share the blame if any is to be shared and in any gathering he places the comfort of each one before that of himself. It was really the motorman's fault, for he persisted in looking north when we were running from the south. But missing the car gave us another half hour together, during which Professor Strong showed the new building in which he is to teach, with as much interest as he would have exhibited more than thirty years ago when I first knew him.

Professor Strong keeps young. In conversation he enters heartily into the discussion of any subject, asking questions and seeking information, but usually imparting more than he receives. He has the liberality of a man of broad culture. His sympathies extend to people of all ages—to children and old people as well as to those of his own age. He is especially interested in chemistry, physics, natural history, literature and painting. He likes to take long walks in the country, and he is quite willing to talk with you about politics or religion, although he does not force his ideas upon you. He is good natured. It must please those who know him to even think of his ringing laugh or his cordial greeting.

I do not know that I can say more unless it be to add that I believe his influence on my life, at least my earlier life, ranks next to that of my mother. May we all follow the example he sets for us by keeping young and useful and by scattering sunshine about us until we say goodbye to this beautiful world!

Ossian C. Simonds